

Appln No. 10/706,024
Amdt date September 3, 2009
Reply to Office action of June 3, 2009

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Final rejection dated June 3, 2009, the Examiner maintained the rejection of claims 1-7 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly obvious over Griffin, III (U.S. Patent No. 6,144,870) in view of Houser, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,855,552) with evidence from Davies, et al., "The Rate Dependence of Confor Polyurethane Foams," *Cellular Polymers*, vol. 18, no. 2 (1999). In maintaining this rejection, the Examiner argues that "[c]laim 1 does not require heating during wrapping," and therefore that Applicant's arguments that the heating device of Houser cannot heat the shaft during wrapping are irrelevant. Office action, page 2. However, independent claim 1 recites, "wherein *during wrapping*, the shaft of the tip section is heated sufficiently to soften the material of the tip section shaft." As such, claim 1 does recite that the shaft of the tip section is heated *during wrapping*. As discussed in Applicant's previous response, the device of Houser cannot heat the shaft of the tip section *during wrapping* because the Houser device completely surrounds the outside of the tubular body and would prevent access to the shaft of the tip section during heating, making wrapping the portion of the electrode lead wire around the circumference of the shaft impossible. See Figures 8 and 9, and column 3, lines 15-40.


The Examiner also argues that "[w]hile the device of Houser surrounds the shaft, the heat is transmitted toward the interior of the shaft, and it can therefore be said [that] it internally heats [the shaft]." Office action, page 3. While Applicant disagrees, in an effort to expedite allowance of this application, Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to recite that the heating block or rod is positioned inside the shaft. As the Houser device surrounds the outside of the tubular body, Houser fails to teach or suggest this feature. Accordingly, independent claim 1, and all claims dependent therefrom, including claims 2-7 and 9, are allowable over Griffin, Houser and Davies.

Claims 1-7 and 9 remain pending in this application. By this amendment, Applicant has amended claim 1 to place the claims in condition for allowance. The amendments find full support in the original specification, claims and drawings, for example at page 5, line 30 to page

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6, line 5, and Figure 4. No new matter is presented. In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that all of pending claims 1-7 and 9 are in condition for allowance. Applicant therefore respectfully requests reconsideration and a timely indication of allowance. However, if there are any remaining issues that can be addressed by telephone, Applicant invites the Examiner to contact Applicant's counsel at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,
CHRISTIE, PARKER & HALE, LLP

By 

Lauren E. Schneider
Reg. No. 63,712
626/795-9900

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